



Office of Public Instruction
Linda McCulloch, Superintendent
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501

Montana Pupil Transportation News and Updates July 2004



Maxine Mougeot, Director of Pupil Transportation
Phone 406-444-3096
Fax 406-444-0509
mmougeot@state.mt.us

A Monthly Newsletter Published by Pupil Transportation, School Budgeting and Accounting Division

2004 MAPT Conference Information

The Montana Association for Pupil Transportation (MAPT) held their annual conference June 23, 24, and 25th in Lewistown, Montana. The conference was a huge success. We had a total of 327 school bus driver registrations which included Head Start and many drivers of students with special needs.

The key note speaker was Craig Zablocki, *Humor Is Our Business*, whose presentation was well received. Lori Newcomer from the Montana Behavior Initiative was an enormous hit with the drivers. She gave a general session presentation regarding the school district's responsibility for student behavior on school buses and several smaller sessions with related information on Friday.

The Montana Highway Patrol School Bus **Driver of the Year 2004** award was presented to Edith Sanders from Kalispell. She has been driving school buses for 40 years. She is an active member in her community and church. Edith has a lasting love for kids and she is a kind and loving parent, grandmother and great-grandmother. Edith was overwhelmed by the award. The transportation community celebrates Edith and all drivers like her.

Roger Lunde, salesman for Harlow's Bus Sales was chosen as the **2004 Transportation Person of the Year**. Roger has worked for Harlow almost 30 years. Roger has an awesome sense of responsibility for safety and welfare of kids all over the state. Roger volunteers for many youth oriented activities and he is always available when the transportation community needs him. Roger and his wife Alyce have been married for 33 years and they have two children. The Lunde's make their home in Three Forks.

Congratulations to both Edith Sanders and Roger Lunde.

The MAPT is comprised of school district personnel and school board members. There are contractor, state, county, and Head Start representatives in addition to school bus vendors. These folks work hard to put together a good conference with sessions that apply to the many different facets of bus driving. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to all those that helped. The MAPT raised a nice sum of money to present to Steve Klippenes and his family of Lewistown.

Steve's wife Terry was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer earlier this year and the money raised will be very helpful. We wish Terry well in her fight against cancer.

The next MAPT conference will be in Hamilton on June 22, 23, 24, 2005.

Since You Asked

Are you going to get any new training videos?

Montana Association for Pupil Transportation has recently purchased 3 new videos for OPI. The new tapes are on the list at www.opi.state.mt.us/pupiltransport and ready to borrow. Please contact Raelen Williard at (406) 444-2082 or e-mail at rwilliard@state.mt.us for a video.

The Montana School Bus Contractors Association is going to purchase a new video for the OPI training library. Any suggestions for topics would be greatly appreciated. Please send your helpful suggestions to me by email before August 1, 2004 at mmougeot@state.mt.us.

Because the space for data is too small, I can't tell what the route numbers are supposed to be on the pre-printed TR-6 report that you send me. What should I do?

A few years ago the numbering system for school bus routes was set up so that we could look at the route number and know the county, district, route number and the number of miles associated with that route. Having all that information was nice but it just doesn't all fit in the space that is available on the TR-6. My suggestion is that school districts simplify their numbering system. For instance, if the district amends route #1 from 50.1 to 75.5 miles, the route could become route #1A. If the district wants to track the changes with mileage, the Route #1 could be 1-50.1 and the amended route could be 1A-75.5. There is space on the form for nine numbers and letters. Keep in mind the route number doesn't need to indicate the number of miles of the route because it is listed in the next column.

I have all these old blank transportation forms in my file. What should I do with them?

Being a bit of a pack rat myself, I understand why districts

keep copies of old forms around. With advancement in technology, it is so easy to get a copy of the newest forms that are available. All of the new transportation forms are available on the OPI Pupil Transportation Website. Go to www.opi.state.mt.us/pupiltransport. In the yellow box on the right side of the page, choose <Forms> and all of the forms are listed. If you don't have the most recent copy of Adobe, follow the directions at the bottom of the pupil transportation web page to get a free update which is also available from the OPI site at www.opi.state.mt.us.

When will these pupil transportation forms be available to do the data entry on-line?

The TR-35 form will soon become available to enter data on-line. Districts will access the document with a password consistent with MAEFAIRS requirements. We are currently testing the new program.

Once the program is available, districts will be able to submit the TR-35 (driver certificate) electronically. When the electronic form is completed, districts will be able to print, copy and submit the signed paper copy. The green four part form will no longer be available.

The driver certification reports that are now electronically posted to the Internet will be available to the districts from the new program. The OPI will make sure that the form is signed appropriately and data was entered correctly.

The next piece to become electronic will be the bus information file. We will combine the bus lists utilized for the bus depreciation fund and for pupil transportation reimbursement. Once the data file is complete, districts will update the file when they add new buses or remove buses from the fleet. This data will only have to be entered one time and both systems will access that one file. This one step will eliminate data entry errors at both state and district levels. The new program will have reports that the district can print and file. Call Maxine at (406) 444-3096 if you have questions or comments.

Quote of the Month

"When you do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world."
- George Washington Carver (1864-1943)

New Directors in Pupil Transportation

Belgrade Public Schools has hired Bob Evans as its new transportation director. Bob said that he has a host of skills that will help him to maintain a successful pupil transportation program. Bob said that he will rely on the bus drivers that have been working in the program. This will give him the time and opportunity to become fully oriented with the current setup while allowing him to develop a much needed infrastructure for the program. Also, considering the level of change the transportation program has endured in a relatively short period of time, Bob feels a slow approach to change is in the best interest drivers and students.

Bob mentioned that he is looking for a GIS routing program that is user friendly and will allow for expansion to take care of the overwhelming growth that is going on in the Belgrade area. Bob can be reached at (406) 388-7217.

Kalispell Public Schools has hired Chuck Cassidy as its new Transportation Director. Chuck is a retired Navy Officer originally from Alabama. Chucks family consists of his wife and two teenage sons. His hobbies are hiking and white water rafting.

Chuck's experience includes naval base transportation consisting of military and civilian buses, shuttles and vans. Chuck said he is working hard to learn the ropes and he is relying heavily on his staff. He is excited about the coming school year and has already been working closely with the Kalispell area school bus contractors. Chuck can be reached at (406) 751-3402.

Glendive Public Schools has hired Gary Carlson as its new Transportation Director. Gary, his wife Judy and their two children have lived in Glendive for over 23 years. Gary's experience includes store manager for Glendive Sales. He has been a wrestling coach and a baseball coach. Gary is an avid motorcyclist.

Gary is looking forward to a successful year in pupil transportation. He is working on getting his computer up and running. His immediate plans include bus driver training and implementing policies that will encourage communication with parents to insure student safety. Gary can be reached at (406) 228-2419.

PLEASE PROMPTLY RETURN TRAINING VIDEOS
IMPORTANT DATES

Registration forms for any bus driver training listed below can be found at www.opi.state.Mt.us/pupiltransport.

August 2004 First Semester TR-13's (Bus Inspection Forms) due to OPI prior to the first day of school

August 21, 2004 Townsend Bus Driver Training – contact Buffy Woodring at (406) 266-3561

September 11, 2004 Kalispell Bus Driver Training – contact Pam Berry at (406) 752-7681

October 1, 2004 Safety Poster Contest State Deadline

October 1, 2004 TR-1's (Bus Routes) are due to the County Superintendent

October 15, 2004 The OPI will notify clerks and County Superintendents of Individual Contract daily rates

October 15, 2004 TR-1's (Bus Routes) are due to the OPI

October 22, 2004 Fromberg Bus Driver Training – contact Renee Shanks at (406) 668-7649

October 17-23, 2004 National Safety Week

Update bus driver certificates, bus inspection forms, route information and transportation contracts regularly.